المجلس الإسلامي
Islamic Council

25 June 1991

Mr Tony Benn, MP
House of Commons

Dear Mr Benn,
Last Thursday Mr Abdelmoumem Diouri, a leading Moroccan opposition politican, was arrested in Paris by French security forces. He was returning to his home in Paris from a visit to Spain. He was not allowed to enter his house to see his wife and children, was taken to the airport and deported to Gabon.He requested, if he were not allowed to stay in France, that he be sent to Switzerland or Algeria. This was refused.

Mr Diouri is well-known for his opposition to King Hassan II. Both his parents were killed by the Moroccan security forces and he himself was sentenced to death before being granted political asylum in France where he has lived for the last 20 years. He has recently written a book , not yet published, which is strongly critical of King Hassan and his regime, and we have reason to believe that this lies behind the action taken by the French authorities last week.

You will remember the case of Ben Barka which brought great dishonour to France. We are very seriously concerned about the similarities between that case and this and worried for the safety of Mr Diouri. We have information that there are numbers of Moroccans working with the security forces in Gabon and believe that could be why Mr Diouri has been sent there rather than elsewhere. (He is reportedly under house arrest.) Moreover, he could be sent from there to Morocco where of course he could be in great danger.

President Mitterrand has said that Mr Diouri has been expelled because he has 'committed too many offences', but he has not detailed any. Nor has there been any explanation of why Gabon was chosen as the country to which to send him against his wishes.

Knowing your deep concern for human rights and justice, I appeal to you to take up this case with the French authorities in an effort to secure the safety of Mr Diouri's life, for which we are gravely concerned.

With respect and best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

Salem Azzam

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Secretary General

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